

“Oh Look Mummy, an Otter”

This is just one of many misconceptions I've come across regarding our fuzzies whilst taking our two around town or on the beach.

You will no doubt have heard many similar comments on your encounters with the misinformed non-ferret owning public. One of Ferret PAWS (NZ) aims is by introducing our pets to as many people as possible, we can dispel some of the myths and rumours we all come across. This can only be achieved through personal contact and taking every opportunity to promote our lovable friends.

Recently most ferret publicity has been of a negative nature. We've all seen the write-ups and pictures concerning wild ferrets killing native birds such as kiwi's and penguins, and a little closer to home with chickens and pet rabbits. The mistake is then made by people believing there is no difference between feral and domestic ferrets.

“If yours is not a killer now, if it escapes into the wild it soon will be.” If this was the case with the thousands of domestic ferrets in the USA (ferrets being the most popular mammals for pets after cats and dogs), why are there no reports of ferrets in the wild? This is something that Ferret PAWS (NZ) is presently investigating.

Another reason for negative publicity is anything endangering protected wildlife or livestock is of public interest and therefore newsworthy.

A Ferret Frolic or Ferret Strolls are mostly of interest to ferret owners and their friends. So as you can see it's up to us. If domestic ferrets are to remain pets in New Zealand and not be outlawed as in some states in Australia and USA only we as owners can change public opinion.

So next time someone you meet says “Look Mummy, an otter”,

Introduce your fuzzies,

Explain it's not an otter,

It's not a killer,

It's just like their cats and dogs, a loving and most loved member of your family.

Hope to see you at the Ferret Frolic.

Written by Rick Pope, President of Ferret PAWS (NZ)

